tested and analysed in private laboratories instead of at national laboratories of proven expertise; and

(c) what steps Government have taken against the 'Mafias' and their agents in the plant who attempted to sabotage the modification in Sudamdih Washery to check the flow of coal outside the plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COAL IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI C. K. JAFFAR SHARIEF): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Losses suffered by Burn Standard Company Limited

2614. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Burn Standard Company Limited which is a Constituent of Bharat Bhari Udyog Nigam Limited had incurred an accumulated loss to the tune of Rs. 10 crore till—July, 1986;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Management of Burn Standard Company has been spending a large sums fighting a court case just to stall the implementation of Government's decision to pay the interim relief to the public sector employees; and

(d) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Burn Standard Co. Ltd. was incorporated as Government Company with effect from 1-12-1976. The Company which was running into losses for many years turned the corner in 1982-83 and thereafter had been earning operating profits till 1986-87. Its accumulated loss till 31-3-1986 was Rs. 37.50 crores.

(b) Some of the major reasons for losses incurred by the company prior to 1982-83 include acute shortages in the supply of critical inputs in time, under-utilisation of capacity in the engineering units due to non-availability of free supply items from Railways, frequent and sporadic power cuts resulting in the loss of production, shortage of working capital and execution of unremunerative orders.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The interim relief announced by the Government in August 1987 was not payable to the workmen of Burn Standard Co. Ltd. who are governed by the Tripartite Engineering Wage Settlement. However, the Employees Union at Head Office of the Company at Calcutta instituted a case against the company in December, 1987 for the grant of interim relief. The question of grant of interim relief has been resolved with the Tripartite Engineering Wage Settlement on 28-1-1988 for all workmen and clerical/supervisory staff of Central public sector engineering units in West Bengal who were covered under the last Tripartite wage Settlement dated 2-9-1983. The company had to incur legal expense of Rs. 46,000/- (approx) for defending the aforesaid court case.

Representation submitted by Oriental Power Cables Limited

2615. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representations were submitted to him by the workers of Oriental Power Cables Limited, Kota, requesting for the take over and merger of the Unit with Hindustan Cables Limited; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) The Oriental Power Cables

Employees Union had submitted a memorandum dated 26th November, 1987 requesting for the take-over of the company by the Government of India. The matter regarding this company is already before the Board for Industrial & Financial Reconstruction for examination under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985.

Telecommunication services in Tripura

2616. SHRI NARAYAN KAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the subdivisional headquarters in Tripura remain delinked due to telecommunications difficulties;

(b) whether it is also a fact that 60 per cent of telephones of Agartala Town remain out of order for most of the time; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to improve telecommunications service in Tripura?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) No, Sir, except occasionally due to strike etc.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Although the telecommunication service at Tripura and State capital at Agartala are functioning satisfactorily. Following steps are being taken to improve it further:

(i) For preventing faults in local system at Agartala, upgradation of underground cables and rehabilitation of Distribution points have been initiated.

(ii) For improve reliability of telecom. networks to other smaller stations, including sub-divisional headquarters, smaller capacity wireless system are being proposed between Capital Agartala and the stations during 8th Plan.

Fall in the standard of industrial goods

2617. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the industrial goods produced in India are far below the international standards and their prices in domestics, markets, too, are very high; and

(b) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of Government to inquire into the causes of the low standards of industrial goods?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) It will not be correct to make a general statement that the industrial goods produced in India are far below the international standards and their prices in domestic markets, too, are very high. So far as quality aspect is concerned the Bureau of Indian Standards under its Certification Marking Scheme, ensures quality levels conforming to relevant Indian Standards. In order to make the Indian industry quality conscious, efforts are made to expose the Indian industries to international markets by allowing imports of certain goods under OGL and/or making BIS standards mandatory for large number of goods/commodities.

As regards prices, there are a number of products for which our prices are lower than international prices. Government's main thrust is also to make the Indian industries internally competitive and cost efficient.

(b) In specific areas where quality levels of industrial goods are below the required standards, BIS identifies the deficiencies and causes thereof and provides guidance and assistance for quality improvement.

Prices of medicines

2618. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appear-